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60 Local Eateries Recognized for Commitment to Food Safety

The Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department on Friday recognized 60 local food establishments for their exceptional efforts to make, serve, and sell safe food to the public.

Public health sanitarians presented 10 Gold and 50 Silver Fork Awards during a ceremony Friday. The winning establishments are listed below.

This is the fourth year the health department has offered the awards and the first in which a restaurant – Applebees – has won the Gold Fork. Previously, all Gold Fork winners have been institutions, such as school cafeterias.

“We’re excited to have three facilities winning the Gold Fork for the first time this year, and 10 new Silver Fork winners” said Laurel Riek, environmental health specialist with the health department. “But we’re also excited to see how many repeat winners we have. These are establishments that have demonstrated a long-term commitment to using an effective food safety system that reduces or eliminates the risk of foodborne illness.”

To be eligible for an award, a food establishment must offer sit-down dining and have been open for at least a year. The awards are based on the results of unannounced inspections conducted in 2013 by health department sanitarians. There were 173 facilities eligible for this year’s awards.

To win a Gold Fork Award, a food establishment must meet requirements above and beyond the minimum standards established in state rules, Riek said. This includes:

- Providing food-safety training for managers and staff;
- Having and enforcing employee health policies;
- Having procedures for keeping foods at safe temperatures; and
- Requiring and facilitating good hand hygiene among employees.

To win a Silver Fork Award, an establishment must demonstrate elements of at least three of these four components of an effective food safety system.

“The purpose of these awards is to publicly recognize facilities that are working hard to set food safety systems in place that protect their customers,” Riek said. “There are many other facilities in our county that are close to winning.

“It’s hard work to get and maintain this award.”

Riek noted that inspections are a snapshot in time, not necessarily a reflection of how an establishment does business on a day-to-day basis. That’s why the awards focus on having systems and processes in place.

“If you’ve got a system,” Riek said, “you’re much more likely to have consistent food safety practices.”

For more information, contact the health department at 447-8351 or healthinfo@lccountymt.gov.

Gold Fork Awards Winners:

- Applebees
- Capital High School
- Helena High School
- Helena Middle School
- Intermountain Children’s Home
- Radley School
- Shodair Residential Treatment Center
- Smith School
- Sodexo (School District 1 food service)
- St. Peter’s Hospital

Silver Fork Award Winners:

- Apple-Rehab Cooney Nursing Home
- Arby’s Restaurant
- Augusta Dinner Club, Augusta
- Augusta Public Schools
- Benny’s
- Bryant School
- Buffalo Wild Wings
- Bullman’s Wood Fired Pizza
- Burger King, 2820 Prospect
- Burger King, 3130 N. Sanders
- C Bar N Mission, Augusta
- Captain Jack’s Restaurant
- Colonial Restaurant and Lounge
- Costco Food Court
- Dairy Queen, 1500 Prospect
- Days Inn
- East Valley Middle School, East Helena
- Eastgate School, East Helena
- Emiliano’s
- Four Georgians School

- Hardee's, 1919 E. Custer
- Hardee's, 320 Euclid
- Hawthorne School
- Hunters Pointe Retirement Residence
- IHOP Restaurant
- Jefferson School
- Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwiches
- Kessler School
- Lincoln Dinner Club, Lincoln
- Lincoln School, Lincoln
- Logs Restaurant, Lincoln
- Masonic Home of Montana
- McDonald's Restaurant, 3060 N. Montana
- McDonald's Restaurant, 1901 Prospect
- Montana Law Enforcement Academy
- Papa John's Pizza
- Pizza Hut, 2955 Prospect
- Pizza Hut, 3267 N. Montana
- Pizza Hut, 1001 Euclid
- Ray Bjork Learning Center
- Rossiter School
- Steve's Cafe, 1225 E. Custer
- Subway, 1822 E. Custer Ave.
- Taco Bell
- Taco John's, 1450 Prospect
- Taco John's, 2301 N. Montana
- Target Food Avenue Express
- Warren School
- Wendy's Old-Fashioned Hamburgers
- Wolf Creek School